

Ashok Gajapathi Raju launches 'India Aviation 2016'
5th International Exhibition & Conference begins from March 16, 2016
at Begumpet Airport in Hyderabad

NEW DELHI, April 24, 2015:- Mr. Ashok Gajapathi Raju, Union Minister of Civil Aviation, today launched the '**India Aviation 2016**', which will be held from March 16-20, 2016 at Begumpet Airport in Hyderabad. The fifth edition of the international exhibition and conference will be on the theme, '**India's Civil Aviation Sector: Potential as Global Manufacturing Hub**'.

Mr. Raju said that the civil aviation sector considers safety and security as the most important aspect and its proof was the U.S. Federal Aviation Association's (FAA) upgradation of Indian airlines safety rating to Category 1 under its International Aviation Safety Assessment (IASA) programme.

Speaking about the India Aviation 2016, Mr. Raju said that the stakeholders would get an opportunity to deliberate on policy issues with the government representatives to unlock the huge investment potential of the sector. He added that the government would take on the role of a facilitator to provide industry the much needed impetus for accelerating the sector's growth.

Quoting the example of evacuation of 4000 trapped Indian citizens from Yemen, Mr. Raju stated that in times of crisis when civil aviation, defence and shipping sectors worked together, India experienced unprecedented success in its task. Hence, it was time for all stakeholders to work in tandem to boost the sector's growth. He added that the success of Yemen operation was evident when almost 25 countries urged the Indian government to evacuate their citizens from the country.

Mr. Amitabh Kant, Secretary, DIPP, Government of India, said that the civil aviation sector was a key driver of India's growth. Hence, there was a great opportunity for industry to take a lead in manufacturing aviation components. He added that India has entrepreneurs who have made a radical and rational shift from manufacturing automobile components to making component for aviation and defence sector. This showed that India had the engineering capability and the sector just needed a push in the right direction for becoming a manufacturing hub in civil aviation.

In his presentation on India Aviation 2016, **Mr. Anil Srivastava, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India,** highlighted that more than 250 exhibitors would be a part of this year's event and mentioned some of its key components such as exhibition, conference, CEO Forum, chalets, static display, aerobatics, demonstration flights and media conferences. He added that in this edition there would be conferences and panel discussions where focused industry issues will be discussed not just amongst CEOs but between Indian technical experts and their foreign counterparts in the presence of policy makers.

Ms. M Sathiyavathy, Director General, DGCA, said that the sector did not face any major incident in the recent past and had been granted a safety rating of Category 1 by the FAA. However, the challenge was to sustain the rating. She added DGCA would continue to oversee the measures taken by the civil aviation authorities for safety and security. DGCA had been carrying out comprehensive audits of the sector and would in future also undertake such audits and would work as a facilitator for this industry to grow.

Dr. Jyotsna Suri, President, FICCI, said that India has a vision of becoming the third largest aviation market by 2020 and some notable measures have been undertaken by the government such as the restoration of India's aviation safety rating to Category-I by US Federal Aviation Administration and drafting the civil aviation policy which is aimed at making civil aviation a vibrant sector. However, she said that some issues faced by the sector like mounting debt burden of the airlines, congestion at airports and high taxation need to be addressed. India Aviation 2016 would prove to be an ideal platform to showcase the possibilities of this growing sector, she added.

In his concluding remarks, **Mr. Pratyush Kumar, Chair, Civil Aviation Committee of FICCI and President, Boeing India**, said that to sustain country's GDP growth, aviation sector must grow in double digits as it has a multiplier effect on the economy. India needs to manufacture highly engineered efficient products of high quality at affordable prices to satisfy customers of the aviation sector. He added that the government's call for 'Make in India' coupled with industry's urge to grow would help in unlocking the full potential of the sector.

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